

Joshua 14 - Thursday, June 7th, 2012

1 These *are the areas* which the children of Israel inherited in the land of Canaan, which Eleazar the priest, Joshua the son of Nun, and the heads of the fathers of the tribes of the children of Israel distributed as an inheritance to them.

- Right at the start, we begin with a chapter that would arguably be deemed both unimportant, and uninteresting, in terms of applying to our lives.
- If we were all honest, we would have to admit that the Israelites inheritance according to their families doesn't really mean anything to us today.
- However, for those who are students of God's Word, you know that every word in God's Word is useful to us, in that it's there so as to teach us.

2 Timothy 3:16 NIV All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness,

- So now the question becomes, what does a chapter in God's Word dealing with the Israelites inheritance teach us, and how does it also train us.
- Well, I am so very glad you asked. There are a number of life lessons that can be learned, if we are willing to allow the Holy Spirit to teach us.
- If we will but give the Holy Spirit permission, this seemingly mundane and monotonous chapter, can come alive in a powerful way as it unfolds.

- Just in this first verse we have one way in which the passage unfolds in how this distribution of the Israelites inheritance speaks to our inheritance.
- By that I mean while this may be perceived as boring for those not on the receiving end of the inheritance the implications of it are important to us.
- The reason being is that God has a plan for us, in His inheritance to us, and by virtue of those territories and the boundaries that He has given us.

- It's not so much a question of what God has for us it's more a question of whether or not we have taken possession of that which He has for us.
- In other words, just because God has already revealed His plan for us, and His call on us, doesn't necessarily mean that we have heeded all of it.
- The bottom line is that as with the tribes of Israel, God has a unique plan and a specific place for each and every one of us in the body of Christ.

(2) Their inheritance *was* by lot, as the LORD had commanded by the hand of Moses, for the nine tribes and the half-tribe.

- For lack of a better way to say it verse two comes with some baggage, in the sense that we're told the inheritance was determined by casting lots.
- I say this because throughout the Old Testament and part of the New Testament, we have accounts of how the lots were cast to make decisions.
- The problem is we no longer need do this anymore because the Holy Spirit of God, through the Holy Word of God, guides the Holy people of God.

- I'm keenly aware that there are those who would argue how that the disciples cast lots in the book of Acts to determine who would replace Judas.
- However, the disciples had done that in chapter one of Acts, which was before the Holy Spirit had come upon them in second chapter of Acts.
- They erred in not waiting until they had the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, and this is evidenced in how we never hear again about Matthias.

- The thought is that instead of the disciples casting lots to decide on Matthias, the Holy Spirit would reveal to them that it was to be Saul of Tarsus.
- For what should be deemed obvious reasons, Paul would become not only a disciple, but, he, by the Holy Spirit, would become "that" Apostle.
- The take away here is very clear as it relates to waiting on the Lord to reveal His will, in His time, by His Holy Word and through His Holy Spirit.

- I believe it's for this reason that it seems the Apostle Paul comes off as a little bit defensive in writing his second epistle to the Corinthian church.

2 Corinthians 1:1 NIV Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, To the church of God in Corinth, together with all the saints throughout Achaia:

- Sometimes I wonder, in my own Christian life, how many Matthias decisions I have made all because I was unwilling to simply wait on the Lord.
- Those Matthias decisions, if you will, are akin to the Ishmael decisions that we make under the banner of wanting to sort of help God out in a way.
- Would to God that we would wait for Him to show us, and reveal to us, what, who, when, and even where it is that He would have us to choose.

(3) For Moses had given the inheritance of the two tribes and the half-tribe on the other side of the Jordan; but to the Levites he had given no inheritance among them. (4) For the children of Joseph were two tribes: Manasseh and Ephraim. And they gave no part to the Levites in the land, except cities to dwell *in*, with their common-lands for their livestock and their property. (5) As the LORD had commanded Moses, so the children of Israel did; and they divided the land.

- I won't take the time in the interest of time to explain the two and a half tribes because we talked about it in our study last week in Joshua thirteen.
- However, we do have a mention here of the cities that the Levites were given instead to dwell in and there is something that I want to point out.
- Namely, that the Levites were to live in close proximity to the twelve tribes of Israel so as to be involved in their lives and minister to them as well.

(6) Then the children of Judah came to Joshua in Gilgal. And Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite said to him: "You know the word which the LORD said to Moses the man of God concerning you and me in Kadesh Barnea. (7) I *was* forty years old when Moses the servant of the LORD sent me from Kadesh Barnea to spy out the land, and I brought back word to him as *it was* in my heart. (8) Nevertheless my brethren who went up with me made the heart of the people melt, but I wholly followed the LORD my God.

- Here we have Caleb brought back into the narrative and for a number of reasons not the least of which is that he recounts what happened prior.
- In other words, he tells the story of how he and Joshua, as only two of the twelve tribes, came back with a good report after spying out the land.
- We have this recorded in Numbers 13 and I think we need to revisit it because this will be germane to our understanding of what Caleb says next.

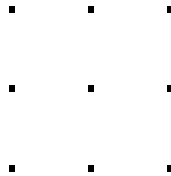
Numbers 13:27-29 27 Then they told him, and said: "We went to the land where you sent us. It truly flows with milk and honey, and this is its fruit. 28 Nevertheless the people who dwell in the land are strong; the cities are fortified and very large; moreover we saw the descendants of Anak there. 29 The Amalekites dwell in the land of the South; the Hittites, the Jebusites, and the Amorites dwell in the mountains; and the Canaanites dwell by the sea and along the banks of the Jordan."

- Now, it's really important to listen to what they are saying when they tell Moses that "the land was exactly as God had promised it would be, but!"
- What they are really saying is though seeing is believing, they're still not believing, even though they're seeing, because their faith is too small.
- I would suggest that their faith is too small, because their God is too small, and no matter what God says or does, it will simply never be enough.

- When they say; "the people who live there are powerful," what they're really saying is; "God is not powerful and our numbers too small!"
- When they say; "the cities are fortified and very large," they're actually saying; "our God is not very large and our strength is too small!"
- When they say; "We saw descendants of Anak," what they're saying is; "their men were big and our God and our people are too small!"
- When they say; "The Amalekites, Hittites, Jebusites Amorites and Canaanites live there," they're saying the Promised-Land is too small!

- Suffice it to say that with this report they put their big God into a small box, and in so doing will never experience what God is capable of doing.
- Perhaps you'll indulge me for just a moment as I demonstrate this with an experiment that I did with a pencil and paper back in Numbers 13.

- Draw nine dots arranged in rows of three in the shape of a box as they are in this illustration that is pictured here.
- Now connect all nine dots in this box using only four straight lines without lifting your pencil from the paper.



- The point is, it's only when we go outside the "proverbial box," with "bigger" lines that we're able to accomplish it and connect all nine of the dots.
- The lesson is that this is true for us when we go outside the "finite box" of what we see, and trust in an infinitely bigger God Whom we can't see.
- I'll take it further and say that only those who believe in a big God, to do big things, will be the ones who "according to their faith will it be done."

(9) So Moses swore on that day, saying, 'Surely the land where your foot has trodden shall be your inheritance and your children's forever, because you have wholly followed the LORD my God.' (10) And now, behold, the LORD has kept me alive, as He said, these forty-five years, ever since the LORD spoke this word to Moses while Israel wandered in the wilderness; and now, here I am this day, eighty-five years old. (11) As yet I *am as* strong this day as on the day that Moses sent me; just as my strength *was* then, so now *is* my strength for war, both for going out and for coming in. (12) Now therefore, give me this mountain of which the LORD spoke in that day; for you heard in that day how the Anakim *were* there, and *that* the cities *were* great *and* fortified. It may be that the LORD *will be* with me, and I shall be able to drive them out as the LORD said." (13) And Joshua blessed him, and gave Hebron to Caleb the son of Jephunneh as an inheritance. (14) Hebron therefore became the inheritance of Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite to this day, because he wholly followed the LORD God of Israel. (15) And the name of Hebron formerly was Kirjath Arba (*Arba was* the greatest man among the Anakim). Then the land had rest from war.

- Couple of closing thoughts here on Caleb the first of which is that he doesn't ask for beachfront property rather he asks for the land of the Anakim.
- I'm of the belief that it was Caleb's boldness and strength that not only enabled him to silence his fellow spies, but to possess the land of giants.
- This is as inspiring as it is convicting in that it shows me my need for the Holy Spirit to search my heart for this giant faith to possess giant land.

- Second, notice that conspicuously absent from the account is any hint of bitterness, resentment or jealousy on the part of Caleb towards Joshua.
- If the truth be known, he was just like Joshua and could have been the heir apparent to succeed Moses in leading Israel into the Promised-Land.
- I suppose you could say that to some degree he had every right to feel slighted, and could have been justified in getting a better piece of the pie.

- So how is it and why is it that we don't see Caleb behaving or responding in this way? What follows are four reasons to consider as to why.
- 1. He was loyal by virtue of how he know his place and his calling to be a "second."
- 2. He was meek by virtue of how he did not think more highly of himself than he ought.
- 3. He was strong by virtue of Who His God was, and that He was the source of that strength.
- 4. He was courageous by virtue of what he had been promised.